

THE CIA:

Admiral Turner's Fight

Adm. Stansfield Turner steamed into CIA headquarters last March under a clear set of orders from Jimmy Carter: strip some of the cloaks, daggers and confusion from U.S. intelligence operations. By last week, Turner's mission had become a serious, bureaucratic battle—with no less an adversary than Defense Secretary Harold Brown. The immediate issue was whether the CIA or the Pentagon should control two defense agencies responsible for U.S. spy satellites, planes and other electronic surveillance. But the broader question was whether Carter would reorganize the entire U.S. intelligence network—and put Turner in charge of it.

Turner, 53, clearly has his eye on the job. For weeks, intelligence men told NEWSWEEK, Turner has been using his considerable influence with Carter to press for a "full consolidation" of U.S. intelligence operations under the CIA. "Turner's made this a big campaign," says one candid operative. "He wants it to happen very, very badly." If Turner is named "Director of National Intelligence," he could become the most powerful intelligence officer since World War II. But critics demur. "He knows how to throw his weight around," reports a Carter aide, "but he has thrown around too much too soon."

Errors and Abuses: Turner's bid to take over the National Security Agency and the National Reconnaissance Office, both firmly under the wing of the Pentagon, quickly brought Brown out fighting. Brown, aides say, has told Carter that such a consolidation could put unseasoned civilians in control of military intelligence and increase the risk of disastrous errors and abuses of power. "If the CIA director becomes the czar, vital intelligence could be overlooked or ignored," says a top Pentagon officer.

Turner is also under attack at the CIA itself, where a few dissidents grump that he is inaccessible, that he spends more time with President Carter than with The Company. "That's just a bunch of c-r-a-p," Turner told NEWSWEEK. "I've opened my door more than any director." Turner has also opened the door to his son, Navy Lt. Geoffrey Turner, whom he hired recently for a four-month CIA job between Navy berths. "He's just come over to get a look at the agency," Turner explains.

One top Carter aide concedes that Turner has "stylistic problems that are unattractive carry-overs from his Navy days." Carter hasn't yet decided whether to consolidate intelligence operations under Turner, but he apparently likes him. "I only hear very good things about him from the President," says a White House official. With that kind of endorsement, it seems likely that Admiral Turner has just begun to fight.

—TOM MATHEWS with NICHOLAS HORROCK in Washington